

Sustainability Internship with Dominion Energy



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Background

This past summer (2021), I had the opportunity to intern with Dominion Energy at their headquarters in Richmond, Virginia. I was working with both facilities and corporate sustainability over the course of 12 weeks.

I found this position through attending the annual Dominion Energy Student Diversity Conference. I was interviewed shortly after attending the virtual conference and was offered my first-choice internship with the corporate sustainability team.

Dominion Energy is a Fortune 200 energy company with the mission of “delivering reliable, affordable, clean energy; protecting the environment; serving our customers and communities; empowering our people; and creating value for our shareholders.” I got to experience this mission first-hand during my internship.



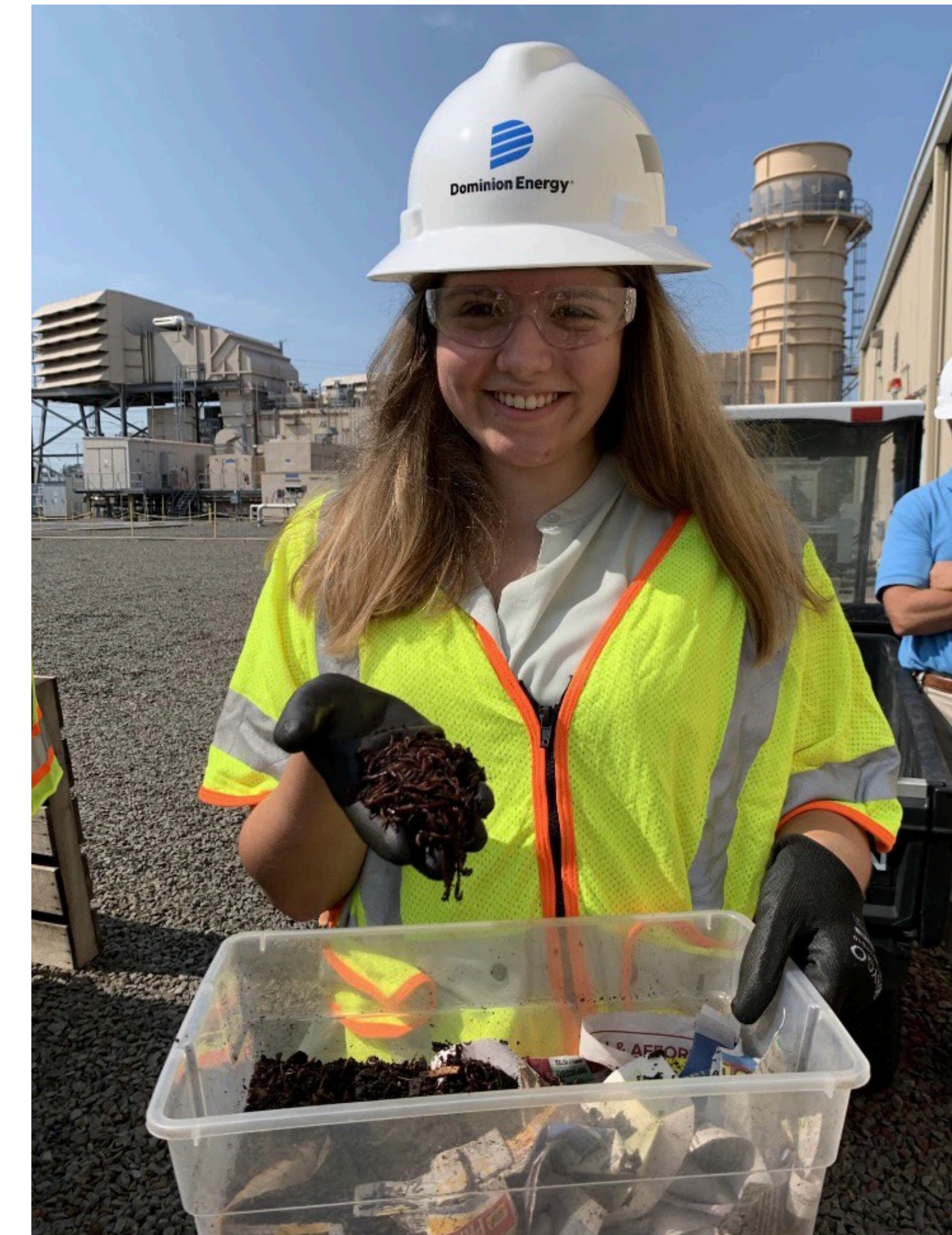
The corporate office in downtown Richmond where I worked most days. The building is lit up for pride month to show support for Dominion's LGBTQ+ employees and the local community.

On the Job & Accomplishments

- Everyday during my internship was different! I had the opportunity to work on many workplace sustainability projects. This includes a Green Building Certification Guide to compare certifications that Dominion has expressed interest in or currently uses. Examples would be LEED or SITES certifications.
- I supported the development of Recycle Coach at Work which is an application the workplace sustainability team is using for Dominion Energy specific recycling guidance.
- I created the Recycling Startup Guide for Dominion Energy locations that are starting recycling or composting to use as a reference.
- I shadowed the environmental compliance team while they visited contractors and I shadowed an internal environmental audit at a solar site.



I spent a week with the environmental compliance team in facilities. This is one of the construction sites we visited.



At Remington Power Station in PPE and holding the worms for the vermi-compost system.

- I made a waste sorting PowerPoint for one of the Dominion Energy campus locations in Richmond. This is playing in their cafeteria.
- I won second place in first sustainability exchange series challenge with my idea to promote Meatless Monday in corporate.
- I helped install a vermi-compost system at Remington power station. For those not familiar, this is a more efficient way to compost for smaller facilities using worms to break down the food scraps.
- Last, I did many smaller-scale things such as updating the workplace sustainability website, helping with the emissions education project survey, shadowing the sustainability exchange series, and connecting with the Richmond-based company Terraviva to help get their products at Dominion Energy buildings and the University of Richmond to discuss their composting efforts.

Conclusion

This internship brought out my passion for renewable energy and sustainability in the energy industry. For after graduation, I want to continue in a similar position and potentially work for a corporate sustainability team or in environmental compliance. I also want to continue to work for a large company because it presents more opportunities to explore different career paths and learn new things.

To any students doing a similar internship in a corporate setting, I would say to take advantage of all the opportunities a large company will give you. I personally explored as many as six different departments to find my best fit.



Renewable energy I got to experience! The top photo is the Dominion Energy offshore wind project off the coast of Virginia Beach. The bottom photo is one of the many solar sites I visited in Virginia.